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PTQ2079

RELEASED IN FULL

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ACTION WHA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	AS-01	ACQ-01	CCO-00	CIAE-00
	DOEE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	UTED-00	FBO-01	H-01	IM-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00	DCP-01	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00
	SP-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01
	DRL-02	G-00	MR-00	SAS-00	/022W		

-----ABDBAB 071721Z /38

O 071722Z MAR 99 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3332
USCINCSO MIAMI FL NIACT IMMEDIATE
SECDEF WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 000714

STATE FOR WHA DUTY OFFICER (WHA/AND -- CAKUETTEH)

CINCSO FOR JOIC DUTY OFFICER

SECDEF FOR OSD FOR COLONEL REINA

E.O. 12958: NA

TAGS: MOPS, MARR, ASEC, PGOV, VE

SUBJECT: VENEZUELA'S MOD REQUESTS IMMEDIATE EOD ASSISTANCE

REF: (A) AMBASSADOR MAISTO/GENERAL WILHELM LETTER 3/3/99
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(B) NARANJO/AKUETTEH TELECON 3/7/99

1. NIGHT ACTION REQUIRED BY EMERGENCY SITUATION. NIGHT ACITON
AUTHORIZED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES NANCY MASON.

ACTION REQUEST:

2. POST REQUESTS THAT DEPARTMENT COORDINATE WITH APPROPRIATE DOD
OFFICES TO APPROVE IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY EOD ASSISTANCE FOR THE
VENEZUELAN ARMED FORCES. THIS ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED URGENTLY.
POST SEEKS AUTHORIZATION TO PERMIT FIVE MARINES FROM 3RD MAW,
1ST MEF FROM TWENTY- NINE PALMS, WHO ARRIVED TODAY IN MARACAIBO
AND ARE EN ROUTE TO FUERTE MARA, TO CARRY OUT THIS MISSION. END
ACTION REQUEST.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ALAN H FLANIGAN
DATE/CASE ID: 28 FEB 2007 200503244

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SUMMARY:

3. VENEZUELAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE MAJOR GENERAL RAUL SALAZAR REQUESTED, THROUGH THE EMBASSY, U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE SAFELY RECOVERING EXPLOSIVE MATERIAL FROM A SEVERELY DAMAGED BUILDING, ON MONDAY, MARCH 1. THIS ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED FOLLOWING AN EXPLOSION AT FUERTE MARA NEAR MARACAIBO DURING THE LAST WEEK OF FEBRUARY. THIS EXPLOSION DESTROYED ONE STORAGE FACILITY, AND LEFT ANOTHER NEIGHBORING AMMUNITION STORAGE BUILDING DESTROYED BUT FULL OF UNDETONATED EXPLOSIVES. BOTH MUNITIONS AND DETONATION DEVICES WERE STORED IN THIS FACILITY WHICH IS NOW HIGHLY UNSTABLE. VENEZUELAN DEFENSE OFFICIALS EVACUATED 30 FAMILIES FROM THE SURROUNDING AREA. THESE FAMILIES ARE CURRENTLY IN TEMPORARY SHELTERS. IN A LETTER TO CINCSOUTH GENERAL CHARLES WILHELM (REF A), AMBASSADOR REQUESTED IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE. A COPY OF REF A FOLLOWS BELOW. POST

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UNDERSTANDS THAT FIVE MARINES FROM THE FIRST MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE (MEF) ARRIVED IN MARACAIBO AT ABOUT 1230 TODAY, AND ARE CURRENTLY EN ROUTE TO FUERTE MARA. END SUMMARY.

EMBASSY POINTS OF CONTACT:

4. COLONEL WILLIAM HUNTER
U.S. MILITARY GROUP COMMANDER
OFFICE: [58]-(2)-682-7749
HOME: [58]-(2)-661-5777
CELLULAR: [58]-(16)625-4140

BRIAN R. NARANJO
POLITICAL OFFICER
OFFICE: [58]-(2)-977-2842
HOME: [58]-(2)-976-3069
CELLULAR: [58]-(16)-631-2609

AMBASSADOR'S LETTER TO CINC SOUTH:

5. BEGIN TEXT:

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
CARACAS, VENEZUELA
AMBASSADOR

MARCH 3, 1999

GENERAL CHARLES E. WILHELM
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, USSOUTHCOM

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3511 NW 91 ST AVE.

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MIAMI, FL 33172-1217

DEAR GENERAL WILHELM:

I NEED YOUR HELP IN OBTAINING EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL
ASSISTANCE FOR THE VENEZUELAN ARMY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION IN AN ARMY FORT IN MARACAIBO LATE
LAST WEEK. AN AMMUNITION STORAGE BUILDING WAS BLOWN AWAY
LEAVING ONLY THE FOUNDATION. FORTUNATELY, THERE WERE NO
SYMPATHETIC EXPLOSIONS IN THE OTHER FOUR STORAGE BUILDINGS.
HOWEVER, ONE BUILDING CONTAINING BLASTING CAPS, TNT, DETCORD
AND OTHER HIGH EXPLOSIVES DID COLLAPSE, LEAVING THE CEMENT
ROOF LYING ON THE EXPLOSIVES.

GENERAL SALAZAR VISITED THE SITE ON SUNDAY AND ORDERED THE
IMMEDIATE EVACUATION OF THIRTY FAMILIES WHO WOULD BE AT
RISK FROM FURTHER EXPLOSIONS. BASED ON HIS ASSESSMENT
THAT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE DOES NOT HAVE THE REQUISITE
EXPERTISE TO REMOVE THE DEBRIS WITHOUT CAUSING FURTHER
EXPLOSIONS, HE HAS ASKED THE EMBASSY TO PROVIDE AN EOD TEAM,
OR EVEN ONE EXPERT WITH WHATEVER SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT HE
MIGHT NEED, TO SUPERVISE THE REMOVAL OF THE DEBRIS AND UNEXPLODED
MUNITIONS. GENERAL SALAZAR IS EVEN PREPARED TO SEND AN AIRCRAFT

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TO PICK UP THE SERVICEMEN YOU IDENTIFY.

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WE HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH USARSO, BUT THEY ARE APPARENTLY
TAPPED OUT DUE TO THE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO CENTRAL AMERICA.
I WOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD OBTAIN THIS ASSISTANCE
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FORM ASSESTS AT YOUR DISPOSAL.

SINCERELY,

JOHN F. MAISTO

END TEXT

MASON

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